

United States Mint Recovers 10 Famed Double Eagles

August 11, 2005

Washington — The United States Mint has recovered ten more of the fabled 1933 Double Eagle gold pieces. These numismatic artifacts were illegally removed from the United States Mint at Philadelphia more than 70 years ago.

“These Double Eagles were never lawfully issued, but instead, were taken from the United States Mint at Philadelphia in an unlawful manner more than 70 years ago,” said United States Mint Acting Director David Lebryk. “They are, and always have been, public property belonging to the United States. We are pleased that these 10 Double Eagles have been recovered.”

To ensure that they are properly secured, the recovered 1933 Double Eagles will be held in the United States Bullion Depository at Fort Knox. The United States Department of the Treasury does not intend to monetize, issue or auction them. The United States Mint will assess the best way to use these historical artifacts, including possible public exhibits, to educate the American people.

With the assistance of the U.S. Secret Service and the Department of Justice, the United States Mint recovered the 10 gold pieces in Philadelphia in September 2004, after being approached by an attorney whose client allegedly possessed the Double Eagles. With the help of the Smithsonian Institution, the United States Mint authenticated the gold pieces on June 21, 2005, as genuine 1933 gold Double Eagles. They were produced at the United States Mint at Philadelphia in 1933, but they were never issued as coinage.

The United States Mint’s Eagle gold coin was first produced in 1795 with a \$10 denomination. When the United States Mint first struck \$20 gold pieces in 1850, they were popularly called “Double Eagles.”

About 445,500 Double Eagle gold pieces were minted in 1933. However, President Franklin Roosevelt took the United States off the gold standard in an effort to help the struggling American economy recover from the Great Depression. As a result, none of the Double Eagles was ever issued at that time; instead, all but two of the 1933 Double Eagles were ordered destroyed. However, in addition to these two, which were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution, the Government has now recovered a total of 20 specimens that were stolen from the United States Mint at Philadelphia. Nine of the 20 Double Eagles were seized by, or relinquished to, the U.S. Secret Service in the 1940s and 1950s, and were subsequently returned to the United States Mint and destroyed.

One 1933 Double Eagle surfaced in 1996 and was seized by the U.S. Secret Service. The gold piece was returned to the United States Mint, and following a legal settlement, was issued and auctioned in New York City for \$7 million on July 30, 2002.

“The 2002 auction was the result of a legal settlement. At the time, the United States Mint declared that it would not monetize or sell future 1933 Double Eagles that might be recovered,” said Acting Director Lebryk. “We do not intend to monetize, issue, or auction the recovered Double Eagles.”

The 1933 Double Eagle obverse features “Liberty,” a figure reminiscent of a Greek goddess. The image was designed by famed sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The reverse features a majestic eagle. The United States Mint, the world’s largest coin manufacturer, produces about 13 billion coins annually for trade and commerce. The 213-year-old Federal agency, with about 2,000 employees and facilities in six locations, also makes coins for collectors and investors.

For a digital image of the 1933 Double Eagle gold piece.

[Click here](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- For information about the United States Mint, please visit [/about/about](#).
- To subscribe to United States Mint electronic product notifications, news releases, and public statements, visit <https://catalog.usmint.gov/email-signup>.
- Sign up for [RSS Feeds](#) from the United States Mint and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Pinterest](#).

Contact

Press Inquiries: Office of Corporate Communications (202) 354-7222

Customer Service Information: (800) USA MINT (872-6468)

Tags:

American Eagle

Coin Dealers

Collect

Gold

Press Release

1-800-USA-MINT

SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES AND TEXT MESSAGE ALERTS ABOUT PRODUCTS

EMAIL ADDRESS

Subscribe

+1 ### ### ###

Sign Up

[Privacy Policy](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Accessibility](#) [Plug-Ins](#) [Site Map](#)

© 2019 United States Mint All Rights Reserved.